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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO AUSTRALIA GROUP COLLECTIVE;
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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [ETTC](#) [AS](#) [FR](#) [RS](#) [CBW](#)

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA GROUP: PLENARY MEETING, PARIS, APRIL 14-18, 2008 REF: A. 07 MOSCOW 5535 B. 07 PARIS 2593 Classified By: ESTH/NP COUNSELOR RC

1. (C) The Australia Group (AG) held its 2008 plenary in Paris from April 14-18. In addition to approving several updates to the AG's Guidelir

2. (SBU) After a year of collaboration, AG members hosted a technical experts meeting to discuss oligonucleotides and advances in synthetic bi

3. (C) The Group also made the following decisions: -- Amending the dual-use chemical and biological equipment control lists to address intang

----- APRIL 14 CONSULTATIONS -----

4. (C) The U.S. Del met with the Australia delegation and AG chair Ian Biggs on April 14 to discuss the plenary agenda and share views on expe

----- OLIGONUCLEOTIDES EXPERTS MEETING -----

5. (SBU) The Chair presented his objectives for the meeting, which were to: expand the scope of the oligonucleotides discussion group to encom

6. (SBU) Proposal to Change the Oligonucleotide Group's Title: Korea asked the Chair about the state of the oligonucleotides discussion. The C

7.(SBU) Suspicious Orders Checklist: The European Commission (EC) raised the issue of whether it was the mission of the AG to control synthetic

8.(SBU) Australia asked whether the group should reorder items on the list based on their priority and suggested changing the title to read 'Gu

9. (SBU) Overview of Advances in Synthetic Biology: The U.S. Defense Department provided a presentation on recent advances in synthetic biolo

10.(SBU) Consideration of Possible AG Responses to these Advances: The Chair gave his sense that AG members preferred awareness raising measure

11.(U) Next Steps: The U.S. suggested exchanging information over the coming year on domestic regulatory initiatives and the self-governance ac

----- PLENARY SESSION I -----

12.(U) Chair's Introduction: The first plenary session of the 2008 plenary session was convened by Australia Group Chair Ian Biggs on April 16.

14.(SBU) Opening Statements: Slovenia delivered an opening statement as president of the European Union thanking Australia for its continued le

15.(SBU) Australia Group and International Conventions: The Netherlands presented on the first week of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) Se

16.(S) Membership: -- The AG chair reviewed the previous AG chair's (John Sullivan) report on his outreach visit to Moscow on November 20, 2007

17. (U) Outreach: The AG chair summarized his outreach activities undertaken with non-members, noting specific requests for assistance made by

----- IMPLEMENTATION MEETING -----

18. (C) Chemical Issues: -- The plenary did not agree to adopt the Canadian-UK proposal for controlling ceramic-coated valves (AG/Mar08/CL/CND

-- The plenary did not agree to adopt the UK proposal for adding 'sensors' to the current control for toxic gas monitoring systems (AG/Mar08/CI

-- The plenary did not agree to adopt the Finnish proposal for controlling related software used in dual-use chemical and biological equipment

19. (C) Biological Issues:

-- Spain withdrew their proposal to develop a sensitive biological agents list (AG/Mar07/CL/E/1) from consideration at the implementation meeti

-- The plenary agreed to adopt the German proposal to revise the related technology portions of the dual-use chemical and biological equipment

-- The plenary did not agree to adopt the joint U.S.-UK proposal to revise the cross (tangential) flow filtration entry in the dual-use biologi

-- The plenary agreed to adopt a modified version of the U.S. proposal to revise the definition of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) on

20. (SBU) Further Enhancement of Implementation Measures: The U.S. presented a discussion paper on potential clarifications for the dual-use c

21. (SBU) Report on the Oligonucleotide Technical Experts Meeting: The chair of the experts working group gave a report to the implementation

----- INFORMATION EXCHANGE MEETING -----

22. (C) 30 presentations were made by 12 AG members on chemical and biological programs of concern, trends and developments in CBW proliferati

----- ENFORCEMENT EXPERTS MEETING -----

23. (SBU) The enforcement exchange provided a valuable opportunity to share experiences, discuss methods of outreach to industry, reduce non-c

24. (U) Enforcement Manual: There were no changes or modifications to the manual submitted for approval to the AG Enforcement Delegates. The t

25. (SBU) U.S. Presentation: The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) delegate delivered a presentation that outlined ICE legal authoriti

26. (SBU) Other Presentations:

-- The Netherlands gave a brief presentation focused on the challenges posed by trade in second hand laboratory equipment and was a timely remi

-- Croatia, a new AG member, provided an overview of Croatian Customs and briefed two cases where they were able to detect and seize two separa

-- Italy provided a presentation that described the Italian Customs web-based application for requesting export licenses for dual-use commoditi

-- Japan provided a presentation that outlined their Internal Compliance Program, which is administered by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and I

-- The New Zealand Customs Service provided an outline of their recent implementation of new Customs Tarriff Codes for companies importing CWC

-- Cyprus's Department of Customs and Excise reported on their export control policy. This included a description of the functions of various g

-- The Republic of Korea delivered a presentation explaining their export control system. This included a brief history of the implementation c

-- Germany provided a brief presentation on their automated risk management system. The system is a computer-based system that allows customs c

-- France provided an in-depth assessment and awareness raising of the possible uses of biocides and phytopharmaceutical chemicals. These chemi

----- PLENARY SESSION II -----

27. (SBU) Plenary Reports: AG members approved the summary reports submitted by the implementation, information exchange, and enforcement chai

-- The AG chair presented the results of his national implementation survey and stated that another survey will be circulated prior to the 2009

-- The UK informally proposed circulating a brief questionnaire for the chemical and biological industry leaders in AG member countries during

-- The chair recalled a letter sent to the chair from the Chair of the UNSCR 1540 Committee requesting information from AG members on steps tak

----- PRESS RELEASE -----

129. (U) The AG approved the following press release: Media Release 2008 Australia Group Plenary Representatives of 40 countries and the Europe

----- LOOKING AHEAD -----

130. (S) The U.S. Del should take following actions over the coming year: -- Solicit comments from AG members on the U.S. proposal concerning c

----- U.S. DELEGATION -----

131. (SBU) The U.S. Delegation: Robert Mikulak, Department of State, Head of Delegation Mark Hartell, Department of State, Deputy Head of Delegation
PEKALA